

# Global Pro Bono Guide 2026

## Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Vietnam

### Introduction

Since Vietnam introduced the “Doi Moi” (Renovation) policy in 1986, the country has undergone major economic and political changes, in turn leading to deeper international integration. These reforms have also shaped the legal field, encouraging the growth of legal services and pro bono practices. Legal developments over the years have laid a strong foundation for expanding both areas, highlighting Vietnam’s increasing focus on justice, social responsibility, and equitable access to legal support.

### At a glance

Minimum pro bono hours requirement for lawyers?	Specific pro bono licence required?	May foreign lawyers practice pro bono?	Insurance required for law firm pro bono?	Insurance required for in-house pro bono?	Rules to limit advertising pro bono work?	Does pro bono work count to CLE credit?	Limitations for in-house lawyers to do pro bono?
Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes

### The landscape

Professional regulation	
<p>1. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of legal services, including any licensing required to provide legal services. Please highlight any differences for lawyers working as in-house counsel.</p>	<p>The provision of legal services in Vietnam is primarily regulated by the Law on Lawyers No. 65/2006/QH1,<sup>1</sup> as amended by Law No. 20/2012/QH13<sup>2</sup> (Law on Lawyers), and its guiding documents; Decision No. 856/QĐ-TTg dated 19 July 2022, which approves the Charter of the Vietnam Bar Federation;<sup>3</sup> and Law on Legal Aid No. 11/2017/QH14 dated 20 June 2017<sup>4</sup> (Law on Legal Aid) regulates legal aid.</p> <p>The requirements for practising law apply universally to both in-house lawyers and lawyers in private practice. Specifically, such individuals must: (i) hold a bachelor’s degree in law; (ii)</p>

<sup>1</sup> See <https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Doanh-nghiep/Luat-luat-su-2006-65-2006-QH1-12981.aspx> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

<sup>2</sup> See Law No. 20/2012/QH13 at <https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Dich-vu-phap-ly/Law-No-20-2012-QH13-amending-and-supplementing-a-number-of-articles-of-the-Law-153144.aspx?tab=1> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

<sup>3</sup> See <https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Dich-vu-phap-ly/Quy-et-dinh-856-QD-TTg-2022-phe-duyet-Dieu-le-Lien-doan-Luat-su-Viet-Nam-522589.aspx> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

<sup>4</sup> See <https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Dich-vu-phap-ly/Luat-Tro-giup-phap-ly-2017-322938.aspx> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

	<p>complete a lawyer training course at the Vietnam Judicial Academy; (iii) undergo a 12-month apprenticeship at a law-practising organisation; and then (iv) obtain a practising certificate from the Ministry of Justice and gain admission to the Bar Association of their practice location.</p>
<p><b>Regulatory landscape for pro bono</b></p>	
<p>2. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of pro bono legal services.</p>	<p>The Law on Lawyers has set out the roles in performing pro bono legal services of lawyers, law-practising organisation, Vietnam Bar Federation and provincial Bar Associations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lawyers: Obligated to perform pro bono legal services in accordance with the charter of Vietnam Bar Federation and required to demonstrate the same level of dedication and professionalism as they would in paid cases.</li> <li>- Law-practising organisations: Must facilitate conditions for their lawyers to provide pro bono legal services.</li> <li>- Vietnam Bar Federation: Guides and monitors pro bono legal services, while the provincial Bar Associations will organise activities for lawyers to provide the same.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to the above, Vietnam Bar Federation issued a new Charter of the Vietnam Bar Federation in 2022, and previously, the Decision No. 112/QĐ-BTV, dated 18 October 2018<sup>5</sup> (Decision 112), to stipulate the obligation of lawyers to provide pro bono legal services to any organisations or individuals upon request. Under Decision 112, pro bono legal services can be provided in all areas of law, except for the business and commercial sectors</p>
<p>3. Do lawyers need a license to provide pro bono legal services (beyond usual local qualification to practice law)?</p>	<p>No, lawyers do not require a licence to provide pro bono legal services.</p>
<p>4. Do foreign-qualified lawyers need any additional license to provide pro bono services (beyond their foreign qualification</p>	<p>No, foreign lawyers do not require any additional licence(s) to provide pro bono legal services, but generally, their practising scope in Vietnam under</p>

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.doanluatsubinhphuoc.vn/images/file/QD%20112/QD%20112.pdf> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

to practice law)?	the Law on Lawyers is limited due to regulatory restrictions aimed at ensuring compliance with Vietnam's legal framework.
5. Are lawyers required by such rules to work a minimum number of pro bono hours? If so, how many?	Under Decision 112, lawyers are obliged to perform a minimum of four hours of pro bono legal services per year.
6. Are aspiring lawyers required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services to become licensed lawyers?	No, aspiring lawyers are not required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services in order to become licenced lawyers.
7. Aside from mandatory targets (if any), are there aspirational pro bono hours targets for lawyers set by the local bar association, regulatory body or other body?	There is no aspirational pro bono hours target set by the local Bar Associations, regulatory body, or other entities beyond the mandatory requirement. However, Regulation No. 4617/QCPH/BTP-LDLSVN dated 28 December 2016 <sup>6</sup> (Regulations 4617), which is jointly issued by the Ministry of Justice and the Vietnam Bar Federation, provides guidance that lawyers, even in cases where their mandatory pro bono hours target has already been met, should explain the eligibility for legal aid for those entitled to receive legal aid as prescribed under the Law on Legal Aid. The lawyers may continue providing pro bono legal services in accordance with the relevant regulations or guide them to approach the State Legal Aid Centres and notify the local State Legal Aid Centres.
8. Do lawyers receive any "Continuing Legal Education" (CLE) or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked?	No, lawyers do not receive CLE credits for pro bono legal services. However, the Vietnam Bar Federation has issued Decision No. 144/QD-BTV, dated 20 October 2023 on Reward regulations <sup>7</sup> (Decision 144), according to which active participation in pro bono legal services will be one of the criteria for assessing and granting a recognition award to lawyers.
<b>Insurance and advertising</b>	
9. Do lawyers need professional indemnity legal insurance cover for pro bono legal	Under the Law on Lawyers, law-practising organisations are generally required to purchase

<sup>6</sup> See [https://tGPL.moj.gov.vn/noidung/tintuc/Lists/Diemtingioithieuvan/Attachments/27/quy\\_che\\_4617\\_qcph\\_btp\\_ldlsvn.pdf](https://tGPL.moj.gov.vn/noidung/tintuc/Lists/Diemtingioithieuvan/Attachments/27/quy_che_4617_qcph_btp_ldlsvn.pdf) (last visited on 7 February 2025).

<sup>7</sup> See [https://liendoanluatsu.org.vn/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/QD-144\\_0001.pdf](https://liendoanluatsu.org.vn/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/QD-144_0001.pdf) (last visited on 7 February 2025).

<p>services they provide? Does the requirement differ for in-house lawyers?</p> <p>If insurance is required, can lawyers meet the requirement by working under the cover of another pro bono provider, e.g. in partnership with a private law firm or organization working on the same pro bono project?</p>	<p>professional liability insurance for their lawyers. However, lawyers may only practise at such organisations by establishing or joining the establishment or working under labour contracts. The indemnity legal insurance requirement may encompass all legal services provided by their lawyers, including pro bono work.</p> <p>For in-house lawyers, the obligation to obtain professional liability insurance depends on the terms agreed upon in their labour contracts.</p>
<p>10. Are there any rules that limit or prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients?</p>	<p>Generally, lawyers must adhere to the confidentiality obligations outlined under the Law on Lawyers, which prohibits disclosing information about cases, matters, or clients obtained during professional practise without the client's written consent or unless otherwise provided by laws.</p>
<b>Pro bono practice and culture</b>	
<p>11. What are the main areas of law which require or present opportunities for pro bono? What are the major unmet legal needs?</p>	<p>The main areas of law that require or present opportunities for pro bono legal services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ participating in disseminating legal knowledge;</li> <li>▪ providing legal advice;</li> <li>▪ participating in legal proceedings to defend and protect the rights and legitimate interests of those in need of legal aid.</li> <li>▪ providing representation outside of legal proceedings; and</li> <li>▪ performing other legal services as prescribed by the Law on Lawyers (if any).</li> </ul> <p>Based on public searches, major unmet legal needs may be concentrated in participation in legal proceedings. After the issuance of Regulations 4617, the involved authorities have already performed a five-year review for the period of 2018–2022 with respect to pro bono services and legal aid in the largest city of Vietnam — Ho Chi Minh City. A proposal has been made in that review to implement solutions to increase the number of quality cases, especially those involving participation in legal proceedings.</p>
<p>12. Who are the main providers of pro bono legal services?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organisational providers comprise the provincial-based State Legal Aid Centres and other organisations, such as law-</li> </ul>

	<p>practising organisations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual providers include, among others, legal aid officers and collaborators of State Legal Aid Centres, as well as lawyers.</li> </ul>
<p>13. Are there any noteworthy examples of how innovative technology or artificial intelligence is being used to enable access to pro bono or otherwise as part of pro bono cases or matters?</p>	<p>Based on public searches, there has not been much information about any noteworthy examples of these in pro bono legal services, but efforts to integrate technology into the legal aid services have been advancing. For instance, the State Legal Aid Centres have applied the “Management, Organization, and Operation of Legal Aid” software to support their activities. Additionally, the State authorities are developing the “Legal Aid Information System”, a public investment project aimed at modernising the legal aid sector.</p>
<h3>Sources of Pro Bono Opportunities and Key Contacts</h3>	
<p>14. Describe notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in your jurisdiction.</p>	<p>The main governmental sources in Vietnam will be the State Legal Aid Centres<sup>8</sup>, which operate under the Department of Justice in all provinces and centrally governed cities, as mandated by the Law on Legal Aid.</p> <p>Non-governmental sources include the Vietnam Bar Federation<sup>9</sup> and provincial Bar Associations, such as those in Hanoi<sup>10</sup> and Ho Chi Minh City,<sup>11</sup> which frequently organise free legal consultation programmes and public legal education campaigns to promote access to justice and knowledge.</p>
<p>15. Is there any public or private organization with which a local or foreign lawyer can register to be made aware of pro bono opportunities?</p>	<p>To access information about pro bono opportunities, lawyers may also contact legal aid authorities (e.g., the National Legal Aid Agency under the Ministry of Justice<sup>12</sup>), the Vietnam Bar Federation,<sup>13</sup> provincial Bar Associations (e.g., Ho Chi Minh City Bar Association<sup>14</sup> and Hanoi City Bar</p>

<sup>8</sup> See directory of the State Legal Aid Centers at <https://dstrogiupphaply.moj.gov.vn/home> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

<sup>9</sup> See <https://liendoanluatsu.org.vn/> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

<sup>10</sup> See <https://luatsuhanoi.vn/> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

<sup>11</sup> See <https://hcmcbar.org/> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

<sup>12</sup> See <https://tqpl.moj.gov.vn/Pages/TrangChu.aspx> (last visited on 7 February 2025).

<sup>13</sup> See <https://liendoanluatsu.org.vn/> (last visited on 20 March 2025).

<sup>14</sup> See <https://hcmcbar.org/>.

	Association <sup>15</sup> ), Vietnam Lawyer Association, <sup>16</sup> Center for legal advice and community service of Ho Chi Minh City University of Law, <sup>17</sup> or law firms.
16. Are there any awards, lists or rankings related to pro bono work?	Under Decision 144, active participation in pro bono work is among the criteria for lawyers and law-practising organisations to be granted with awards and recognition by Vietnam Bar Federation.

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## Learn more

[Navigate the full Global Pro Bono Guide](#) to explore the global landscape and pro bono practices and opportunities across 100+ jurisdictions.

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<sup>15</sup> See <https://luatsuhanoi.vn/>.

<sup>16</sup> See <http://hoiluatgiavn.org.vn/>.

<sup>17</sup> See <https://tuvanphapluat.hcmulaw.edu.vn/vi/dich-vu-phap-ly/tro-giup-phap-ly-mien-phi> (last visited on 7 February 2025).